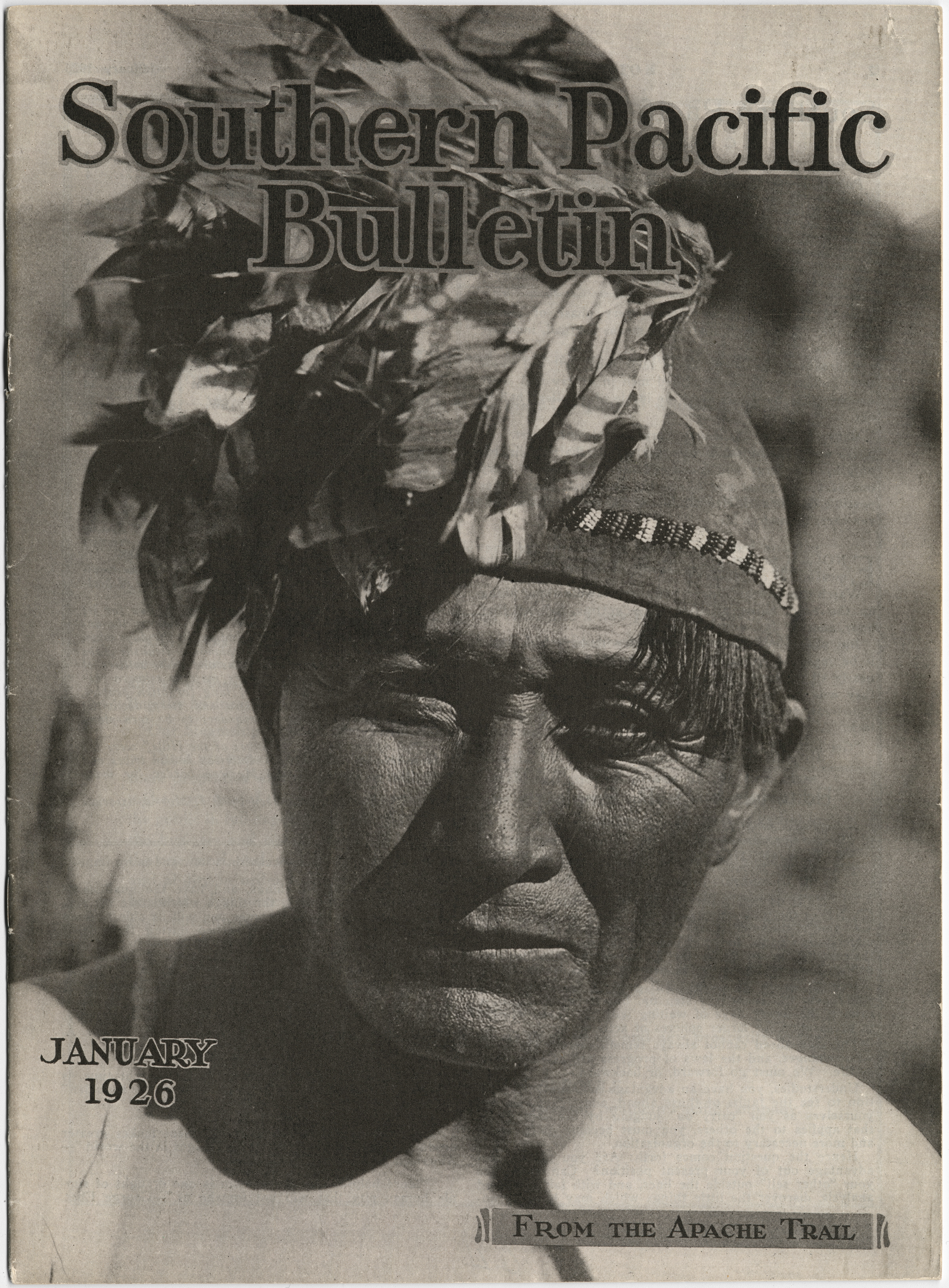
Southern Pacific Bulletin



JANUARY
1926

FROM THE APACHE TRAIL

Good Record Set in Careful Freight Handling

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Superintendent Freight Protection

ONE hundred per cent improvement was made by employes on Pacific Lines in the first nine months of the year in the careful handling of less carload freight. During the period January to September, inclusive, the average number of tons of LCL freight loaded, transferred and unloaded to each irregularity in handling was 919, as compared with 464 for the same period last year. Causes for loss and damage to less carload freight have been corrected to the extent that any further considerable improvement must be in connection with carload business.

Unlike less carload business, which is handled through the station warehouse at time of loading and unloading, carload freight is loaded and unloaded at various industries, team tracks, etc., frequently a considerable distance from the station and it is for that reason difficult to conduct observations which are necessary in the study of causes for loss and damage.

Statistics often furnish a guide to, or index of, those commodities which are most susceptible to damage. A realization of that fact has brought about more extensive methods of recording claim payments by cause and commodity. Such information is used as a guide in conducting investigation and making observations which in turn develop new and more efficient ways of packing, loading, bracing and handling freight.

To inform a shipper of damage to one or a few of his consignments without giving him further information as to cause and without taking into consideration the volume of his traffic, is usually not conducive of good results. If, however, records show that package or bracing failures are occurring frequently in connection with a certain movement, a clear statement of facts will generally interest the shipper. The shipper's assistance in a study of the cause or causes for damage is almost sure to lead to a partial if not a full solution.

On the theory that the shipper's interest is involved to an extent as great or greater than the carrier's, by admitting and earnestly trying to correct our faults, by offering assistance backed by experience and thorough study, we can usually convince the shipper that we do not approach him in a spirit of criticism or to hinder his business, but to help and for the purpose of co-ordination. A spirit of give and take, an open mind and a desire to be of service is essential to success in this work.

Many improvements have been made. We have, for example, established the exclusive use of the so-called "floating brace" for fruit, melons and vegetables which proved to be so superior to the old method of rigid brace which ruined the insulation in refrigerator cars and which usually gave way in transit or formed an obstruction against which frail packages wrecked themselves.

Experiments have been and are now being conducted to perfect a method of wire tying carloads of liquids in barrels so that the load will be divided into two units; friction of the barrels on car floor will prevent a considerable or sudden shift and thus take the place of bracing which has frequently proven inadequate.

We have, too, the "lock corner" method of constructing crates and boxes which more than doubles the shock-resisting power of the package without additional cost in construction.

Perseverance goes hand in hand with progress in freight protection work. The loss and damage claim bill in the United States has been cut down from more than $100,000,000 to $40,000,000 per annum.

LEADERS IN SAFETY WORK WILL BE GIVEN AWARDS

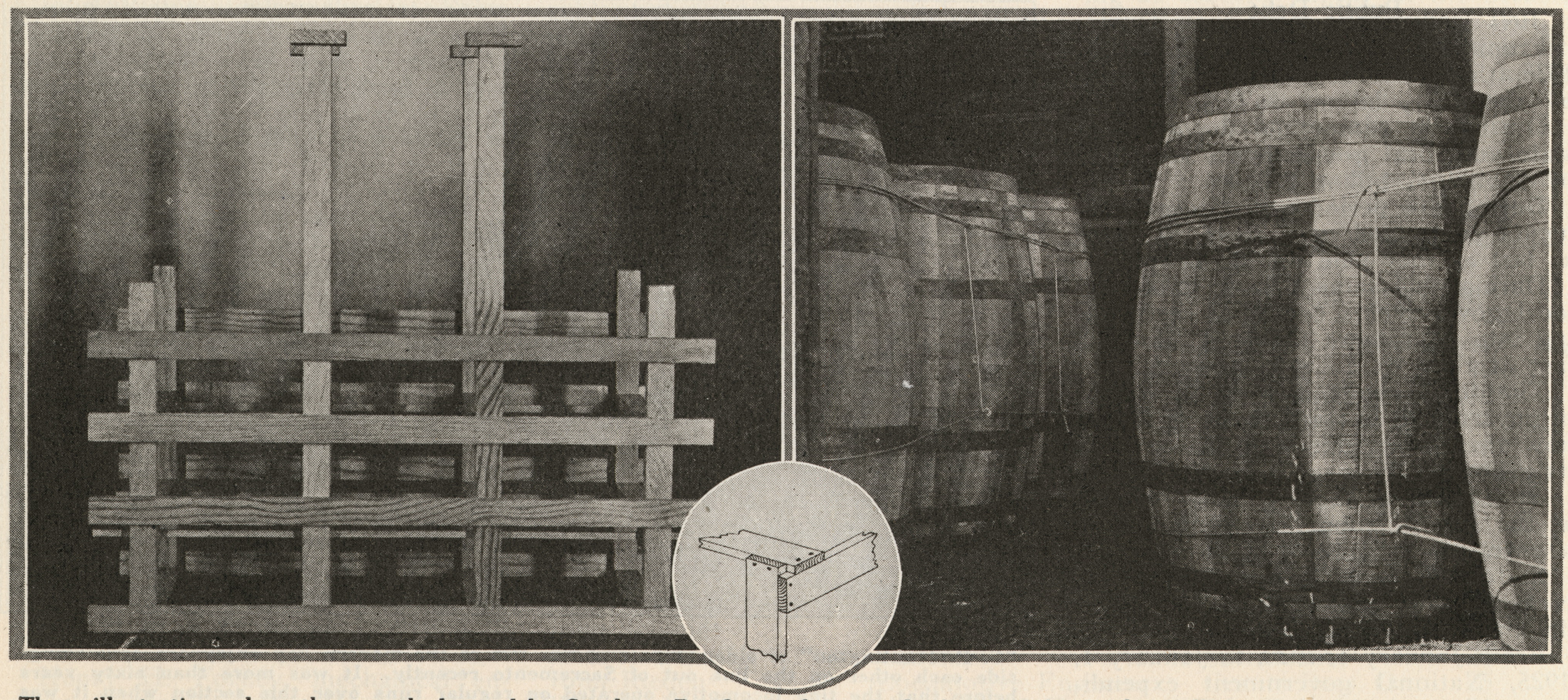
Safety buttons will be awarded to the six employes on each division and at each general shop on the Pacific Lines who did most during 1925 in the furtherance of safety work. Buttons are being provided this year instead of the customary medals. The buttons will be of neat appearance and will be more appropriate to wear than the large, conspicuous medals. The basis of award will be as follows:

1. For each practical suggestion involving a change in standard, new work or which required actual labor to correct and which indicated thoughtful attention by employe, 15 credits.

2. For each suggestion which in the opinion of Superintendent warranted instructions to employes but not involving actual labor to correct and not previously covered by instructions, 10 credits.

3. For each suggestion which in opinion of Superintendent warranted instructions to employes and which had previously been covered by instructions but which did not involve actual physical labor, 5 credits.

4. For each suggestion made but not adopted, 1 credit.



These illustrations show three methods used by Southern Pacific employes in loading freight in their efforts to guard against loss and damage. (Left) Is a side view of floating brace for apples and pears, boxes loaded on sides lengthwise of car, and other deciduous fruit in boxes or crates loaded crosswise of car. The number of uprights to use is governed by the number of rows of packages loaded. The number of crosspieces is governed by the number of layers of packages loaded. (Right) View from doorway of car showing barrels held in alignment by wire ties. (Inset) One of sixteen ways for constructing lock corners for boxes and crates.